

CONFIDENTIAL.]

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REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 9th March 1901.

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I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

The Rozenama-i-Mukaddas Hablul Mateen [Calcutta] of the 25th February has the following:—

Foreigners in Persia.

The Persians are so ignorant a people that foreigners can easily dupe them. Foreign merchants at first entered Persia as professed well-wishers. Their trade in a country means the destruction of nationality in it and its final conquest. The trick and skill which they have employed in other countries, are being employed by them so wonderfully in Persia that the Persians are being captivated by their cleverness. All on a sudden they have brought about a decline of art, industry and trade in Persia and finding the Persians sitting still and silent, in spite of this, they have now addressed themselves to the task of denationalizing and finally conquering that country. The troops they are employing against Persia are more formidable than a countless military force. These are the mercantile goods which will gradually and imperceptibly deprive it of its untold wealth. The foreigners are now introducing the manufactures of their own countries at a great loss. When they will see that their trade in Persia has fully prospered and that the indigenous trade of that country has totally declined, they will increase the price of their goods so as to make up their loss with compound interest. In fact, the Persians are dependent upon foreigners for every necessary article of their consumption, and their wealth is being drained away by the latter. The well-to-do people of Persia have become fond of articles of luxury prepared by foreigners. Even the ladies of Persia have taken to using European novelties and adopted European fashions. In fact, there is no man in Persia, rich or poor, who does not use foreign goods. All this has been reducing Persia to a state of pauperism, which results in strengthening the power of the foreigners in that country. They now see that wealth and national spirit have bidden adieu to Persia and the *alims* and the nobles are hostile to each other. The foreign Ambassadors and merchants are now holding supreme power in Persia. The commonest of them are held in greater respect by the Persians than their own nobles and *alims*. The foreigners are now the wealthiest people in Persia. In Persia, they are rulers of the Persian people, but in a foreign country the latter are very little better than slaves of the people of that country.

ROZENAMA-I-MUKADDAS
DAS HABLUL
MATEEN,
Feb. 25th 1901.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

2. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 27th February says that for some time thefts have been rife in Midnapore town.

Thefts in Midnapore town.

The reason is not that the police is incompetent, but that constables do not go regularly on their rounds. A man may cry at the top of his voice, and yet not get a policeman to come to his help.

MEDINI BANDHAV,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

3. The *Faridpur Hitaishini* [Faridpur] of the 27th February contains the following:—

Detective officers wanted in a police enquiry in the Faridpur district.

In the month of *Sravan* last, there was lodged a complaint in the Ainpur thana, Faridpur, that the wife of Kailash Mandal had been enticed away. But the woman and the man who had enticed her away were detected so late as last *Paus*. An enquiry is on foot to ascertain the cause of this delay. The District Superintendent of Police has been charged with the enquiry. But he may be himself partially implicated in the affair, and he may try to keep himself clear in the matter. This investigation will not produce a satisfactory result, because fit persons have not been engaged in it. No one who knows the circumstances of the case, will be able to accept the report of this investigation as reliable.

FARIDPUR
HITAISHINI,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

Mr. De, the local Magistrate, is requested to make a thorough enquiry with the help of efficient detective officers.

4. The same paper says that a dead body without the head was discovered by some men in a field within the jurisdiction of the Bhusana Police Station, Faridpur, and due notice was given to the thana. But the Sub-Inspector came to the spot four days after, when only a few bones were left.

FARIDPUR
HITAISHINI.

The authorities are requested to find out the cause of the delay in the arrival of the police.

HITAVADI,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

5. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 1st March says that whilst the *Sansodhini* newspaper of Chittagong praises the police arrangements at the *Siva Chaturdass mela* in Chandranath, the other local paper, the *Jyoti*, says that the police constables, to whose mercy the pilgrims were entirely left by the higher police officers, terribly oppressed them and extorted from them most of the money they had brought with them to spend in the worship of the gods. According to the *Jyoti*, three women were killed in Barabakunda, and two young women were abducted from the temple of Swayambhu Nath. These allegations ought to be enquired into.

HITAVADI.

6. The same paper writes as follows:—

We have been alarmed at the increase of lawlessness in Bengal. Kabuli oppression in Bengal. There is not only a recrudescence of dacoity, but oppression by Kabulis has become so frequent and widespread that in many places people have left their homes for fear of them. Serampore is a town not far from the metropolis and has its police, post-office and municipality. Yet it is here that Kabuli *badmashes* have one of their principal *addas*. The people of the town do not know how to save themselves from their oppression. The acquittal of the Kabulis who have from time to time been hauled up before the law courts has encouraged these people in their wicked career. Lately, a postal mail-bag from the Bhadreswar post-office was snatched away from a runner by some Kabulis. The offenders were arrested and sent up for trial, but were acquitted. The postal authorities did not seem to exert themselves in the least to secure a conviction. The Lieutenant-Governor's attention is drawn to this case for, if Kabuli oppression is not soon checked, people will lose all sense of security.

NAVA YUG,
Mar. 2nd, 1901.

7. The *Navayug* [Calcutta] of the 2nd March says that nothing has been heard as to what the police has done about thefts in Theft in Old China Bazar, five shops in Old China Bazar. The thieves broke the locks of the shops, stole and finally escaped after wounding a constable. A shawl and a hurricane lamp left on the spot might serve as traces.

NAVA YUG.

8. The same paper says that the indigent circumstances of the Calcutta woman whose oppression by a constable was reported in a previous issue (see Report on Native Papers of the 2nd March 1901, paragraph 6), have not permitted her to bring a case before the Magistrate against the constable. But she charged him before the Inspector of the Jorasanko thana with demanding bribes, and the charge has been proved on enquiry. The oppression of the woman by the constable looks like the prevalence of anarchy in Calcutta. The Commissioner of Police is expected to check things like these.

BANGABANDHU,
Mar. 2nd, 1901.

9. The *Bangabandhu* [Chandernagore] of the 2nd March says that Kabuli *zulm* at Baidyabati in the Hooghly district, oppression of villagers by Kabuli and Peshwari money-lenders has greatly increased. A woman of Baidyabati recently borrowed some money from certain Kabulis and then absconded. But another woman, who had done nothing besides giving the borrower a good character, is now being harassed by the Kabulis. It will be a matter of great regret if this woman has to liquidate the debt. Government keeps no eye on these Kabulis. They have certainly spread a fascination over the English.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

SIKSHAK SUHRID,
Feb. 12th, 1901.

10. The *Sikshak Suhrid* [Dacca] of the 12th February says that, as pointed out in the issue of this paper for the 31st August 1900 (Report on Native Papers for 15th September 1900, paragraph 17), the object of the order of the District Judge of Backergunge, requiring all revenue sale notices to be published in some local newspaper, is being defeated by their publication in a newspaper which has a very small circulation. That object can, however, be gained by requiring the manager of the paper in which the notices are

published to send a copy thereof to every defaulter whose property is advertised for sale. Such an order can be passed without inflicting any loss on the proprietors of the paper, because the fee which is now given for the publication of a sale notice is sufficiently large to cover this extra expense, and yet leave a handsome profit to the proprietors. If the paper in which the sale notices are now published does not agree to supply copies to defaulters, there are other papers which will gladly do this without demanding an increase of the publication fee.

11. Referring to the Noakhali murder case, the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd February says that it is owing mainly to the firmness of Mr. Ezekiel and Judge Pennell

that the murderers have been convicted and the shameful doing of the police divulged. Mr. Pennell deserves the gratitude of the country.

12. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 28th February says that the country has been deeply interested in Mr. Pennell's judgment.

Mr. Pennell. He has shown extraordinary strength of mind, noble courage and fixedness of purpose. He is the foe of the oppressor and the friend of the oppressed. There are some who say that he has gone mad, for he has censured Lord Curzon, Sir John Woodburn, Mr. Bourdillon and others, not at all caring for his service. Men like Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, Chaitanya were called mad in their times. They are really men whom common people call mad. The name of Mr. Pennell is being adored in every house in this country.

13. The *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 28th February says that Mr. Pennell's judgment has become the subject of daily agitation in the country. In the portion of it which has

been published the fearlessness, the love of truth and justice of the high-minded Mr. Pennell is clearly seen.

14. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 1st March writes as follows:—

Mr. Pennell. Whatever others may say about Mr. Pennell, we, for ourselves, cannot sufficiently praise him.

If it be madness to frankly speak out one's mind, if the telling of truth makes it justifiable to call the teller an unpleasant speaker, then Mr. Pennell did not certainly act wisely. But whether he is praised or not for his wordly wisdom, it is certain that his judgment in the Noakhali case will make his name memorable for simplicity, fearlessness, impartiality and sense of justice.

Mr. Pennell is not one of the class of men who do not hesitate to throw obstacles in the path of the administration of justice, in order to keep "prestige" intact. Neither frowns nor cajolings from superior officers, neither the influence of friendship nor the temptation for preferment could induce him to sully the bench. His name will be long gratefully remembered by man and woman, young and old, in this country. For him there is no fit reward in this world. The fear of losing service did not deter him from following the path of justice and virtue. He has set an example which is worthy of imitation.

Mr. Reily has been released on bail by the High Court, and his case will be transferred from Noakhali. Be that as it may, and be the result of the case what it may, the impression made on the public mind is not to be changed or effaced. The letters which Mr. Pennell has put on the record will always remain there to testify to the mischievous effects of a union of executive and judicial functions. And the judgment, however much it may be blamed for its length and irrelevancy, or pooh-poohed as incoherent talk, will remain deeply engraved on the public mind. The record of the case will bear testimony to Mr. Pennell's moral courage and his action in sending a District Superintendent of Police to *hajut*, without scruple or hesitation, will form a lasting monument to his impartiality.

We worship Englishmen; we also hate Englishmen. We never forget the kindness and sympathy of those high-minded Englishmen whose magnanimity fascinates us. But we hate those who being strong oppress the weak and helpless in order to gratify animal passion or secure personal interest. It is the height of cowardice to beat those who cannot return the blow. We hate those Englishmen who either commit oppression, or encourage those who commit it.

Mihir-o-Sudhakar,
Feb. 22nd, 1901.

Sanjivani,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

Jyoti,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

Hitavadi,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

It is the magnanimity of the English as a nation which has prevented the people of India, even after repeated oppressions, from completely losing their respect for the English character. The Seraj-ud-dowlas of the present day have thrown into the shade the Seraj-ud-dowla of English historians. It is strange that they should be able to commit so much oppression, when there are so many men above them to keep them in check! The old Seraj-ud-dowla was an uneducated and immature boy, but the modern Seraj-ud-dowlas are beasts of mature years and proud of their so-called education.

However that may be, we must say that Mr. Pennell's highmindedness, impartiality and moral courage have charmed us. "Highminded Pennell, by your example you have infused strength into many weak hearts, taught a lesson to many men of fickle minds, and brought to light many secret doings. Thanks to you, many problems have been solved. Come, take an offering of gratitude, respect and affection."

HITAVADI,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

15. The same paper says that the transfer to Godda has failed to alter Mr. Heard's nature, and as Subdivisional Officer of Godda, Mr. Heard has been conducting himself in as highhanded a manner as he did at Deoghur. Lately

he unlawfully ordered the crops of certain raiyats of Raja Padmananda Singh to be destroyed, in order that a road might be constructed over their fields from Karmatar to Sarani. The matter was brought to the notice of the Commissioner, who induced Government to order his transfer from Godda. Mr. Heard, however, is trying to get this order of transfer cancelled, saying that the census work would suffer if he were transferred. As a matter of fact, Mr. Heard has left the whole census work in the hands of his subordinates.

It ought to be enquired why so many cases under section 182 of the Indian Penal Code were instituted at Godda during Mr. Heard's time.

HITAVADI

The Munsif of Raujan in the Chittagong district.

16. A correspondent of the same paper says that Babu Kamala Nath Das, Munsif of Raujan in the Chittagong district, is a very slow officer. He takes up a case, examines one or two witnesses and postpones the hearing. This not only inconveniences and inflicts loss on the parties and their witnesses, but gives opportunities to the parties to tutor their witnesses. The ministerial establishment of the Court is every day becoming more corrupt.

The 'postponement fund,' as it is called, which exists in connection with this Court, and to which suitors have to contribute, has become a source of great hardship to the public. The money collected is spent in public amusements.

NAVAYUG,
Mar. 2nd, 1901.

The release of the accused in the Noakhali Shvatara case.

17. Referring to the release of Lalmiya by the High Court in the Shvatara case of Noakhali, the *Navayug* [Calcutta] of the 2nd March says that while Justices Amir Ali and Pratt have based their judgment on the untrustworthiness of the evidence of the witnesses examined in the case, it is not to be believed that a Hindu husband, who considers it a pollution even to tread upon the shadow of a Muhammadan's body, falsely charged his wife with having an unlawful connection with a Muhammadan. But a Judge's belief and an ordinary man's belief seldom agree.

BANGAVASI,
Mar. 2nd, 1901.

18. Referring to the judgment in the recent murder case at Lahore, in which Mr. Smith has been fined Rs. 100 only for killing his syce, the *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 2nd March says that from its beginning to its end this case has been like a repetition of the Fuller case of Lord Lytton's time. As in the Fuller case, the opinion of the Magistrate and the doctor determined the final decision, so in this Smith case the opinion of the Magistrate and the doctor has determined the final decision. The only difference between the two cases is that when the Fuller case occurred, Lord Lytton was the Viceroy, whereas Lord Curzon is the Viceroy now.

(c)—Jails.

MEINI BANDHAV,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

19. The *Medini-Bandhab* [Midnapore] of the 27th February says that though cartmen are extremely unwilling to sell straw in the Midnapore jail, the jail peons force them to come into the jail and sell straw at less than its market price. Government should make a thorough enquiry into the matter.

(d)—*Education.*

20. The *Sansodhini* [Chittagong] of the 1st March says that it is a matter of great regret that Mr. Percival of the local Collegiate School called Bengalis "a nation of rogues" in the presence of his boys in the classroom. Mr. Percival of the Chittagong Collegiate School.

SANSODHINI,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

Perhaps he said this in a fit of distemper, and it would be very proper for him to ask pardon of the boys and teachers of the school. Mr. Percival should have known that it is his duty, as a teacher, to inspire his boys with self-respect. Mr. Percival having become unpopular among his boys, it is hoped that he will make haste to settle his differences with them. If these differences are not amicably settled, the Chittagong Association will be obliged to interfere in the matter.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

21. The *Tripura Hitaishi* [Comilla] of the 26th February says that the villages Merkuta and Durgapur, under the Brahmapur Local Board, Tippera, suffer acutely from scarcity of water during the winter and summer months. Use of bad water makes the place extremely unhealthy. The District Board has excavated many new tanks and re-excavated many old ones in other places in the district, but the sufferings of the people of these two villages have not been removed.

TRIPURA
HITAISHI,
Feb. 26th, 1901.

Water-scarcity in two villages in the Tippera district.

22. The *Pratinidhi* [Comilla] of the 27th February writes as follows:—

PRATINIDHI,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

The Chandpur Municipality. Chandpur (Tippera) has a population of some 8,000 men, of whom about 20 are Europeans. The Tippera. Joint-Magistrate of Chandpur has nominated seven Commissioners for the local Municipality, of whom five are white men and only two Bengalis. It is useless to say anything against the white rulers of the country. But we have been greatly astonished and extremely mortified at the nomination of Babu Navakanta Mukherjee, the Head Master of the local High School, in preference to many educated and influential men. A complaint filed by the leading men of the place against the Head-master is still pending before the President of the School Committee; and on his visit to the school, the District Magistrate recorded the following remark regarding the Head Master:—"A firm head is wanted and unity of counsel among those concerned in its administration". And this "head" has been appointed to minister to the welfare of the public.

Last year it was proposed to impose a tax of Rs. 2 on every dead body to be burned or buried without distinction of rich or poor. But the majority of the Commissioners being Bengalis, the imposition of the proposed tax was postponed for one year. But there is nothing now to prevent its imposition, the majority of the Commissioners being Europeans.

The late Chairman of the Municipality collected some money from the local zamindars for the purpose of improving the local bazar, the condition of which becomes very deplorable during the rains. But the next rains are near, and nothing has as yet been done in the matter. Fifty or sixty thousand people have come to the Chandranath Mela, but no measures have been taken to ensure their comfort. Their sufferings are indescribable.

KHULNA,
Feb. 28th, 1901

Small-pox in a village near Khulna town. Referring to the outbreak of small-pox in the village of Chandani mahal near Khulna town, noticed in a previous issue of the paper (see Report on Native Papers of 23rd February 1901, paragraph 15), the *Khulna* [Khulna] of the 28th February says that the attention of the authorities has not as yet been drawn to the matter. The local Civil Surgeon and Magistrate are both in the mafasal at present.

NAVAYUG,
Mar. 2nd, 1901.

24. A correspondent of the *Navayug* [Calcutta] of the 2nd March says that under the old Municipal law, the Calcutta Municipality could attach, for arrears of rates, only such moveable properties on the premises as its officers could lay their hands upon, without recourse to violence. The new law, however, has empowered the executive officers of the Municipality to break open doors in order to attach properties, and the power is being already fully

exercised. There was lately a regular *loot* in some half a dozen houses in Ward No. 6. What was done would certainly have been called dacoity if it had been done by any other persons than the servants of the Municipality. In one case Municipal officers forced open the outer and all other doors of a locked-up house, took away every piece of furniture they found in the house and broke many glassware furniture. Lastly, the men with their shoes on entered into the room where the family god is kept, ate every edible they found in the room, and went away. The idol is now missing. The names of three of the men who did all this are Mr. DeCruz, Babu Hari Das Maitra and Babu Bhagavati Charan Bhattacharyya.

The new law authorises the breaking of locks, but it nowhere authorises breaking open of doors by means of axes or kicks; nor does it authorise the demolition of costly furniture.

(f)—Questions affecting the land.

JYOTI,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

Oppressions in connection with
the Chittagong Settlement.

Oppressions are committed by the Recovery Officers engaged in settlement work under the pretext of collecting costs of survey. A case may be cited.

A bill for one anna, on account of the cost of survey of some land belonging to Nasrat Ali as tenant of Syed Ahmad in the Lakhraj mahals, *mauza* Amirabad, within the jurisdiction of Satkania, was issued in Nasrat's name. The amount of bill not being recovered, a notice was issued against him. But he had ceased to be the owner of the land when the amount of the bill was sought to be recovered. After much enquiry the real owner of the land was found out, and a certificate was issued against him for the amount of the bill and the cost of these processes, plus the previous enquiry, the whole amounting to rupees three and anna one. It is in this way that the survey machine is grinding poor people. But no one feels for them; their plaintive cries do not reach the ears of the kind administrators of the country. The mischief that has been done is not remediable. But if Government wakes up and looks to the welfare of the people, more mischief may be prevented.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

KHULNA,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

A railway complaint.

26. A correspondent of the *Khulna* [Khulna] of the 28th February says that recently a cocoa-nut seller in the Dattapukur station on the Bengal Central Railway wantonly quarrelled with a passenger about the price of a cocoa-nut. After exchanging many abusive terms with the passenger the man flung a broken earthen pot at him when the train was moving. Fortunately no one was hurt. All this happened before the eyes of the Station Master, the Guard of the train, and other railway officers, but no one interfered in the matter. The correspondent gives the names and addresses of the men who witnessed the occurrence.

(h)—General.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,
Feb 22nd, 1901.

27. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd February says that a notice, demanding answers to certain questions in connection with the census, has been served on Munshi Leekat Hossain, enumerator of Tulsihata,

Malda, by the local Criminal Court. These questions are so very hard that even learned historians will find themselves at a loss to answer them. Again the sensibility of every Muhammadan is sure to be touched by these questions. The word "পাতিনে" (*patinere*) occurs in these questions, and it is a word which is used only by narrow-minded Hindu Musalman-haters. There is no sect called "পাতিনে" among the Muhammadans. The questions must have been drafted by a mean-minded Hindu. The Magistrate cannot be expected to know the word.

The paper gives answers to the questions.

28. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 28th February says that recently all the second class passengers in a train were detained at Chausa on the suspicion of one of them being attacked with plague, although the passengers in the third and intermediate carriages, so adjacent to the infected compartment, were allowed to go away. The men, numbering twenty-five, were detained in the plague-camp for ten days to their great loss and distress.

SANJIVANI.
Feb. 28th, 1901.

29. The *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 28th February says that the present Inspector-General of Registration, Mr. T. K. Ghosh, is showing great partiality in the appointment of Rural Sub-Registrars. In all cases he gives preference to Hindus. In these places in

JYOTI.
Feb. 28th, 1901.

which the Muhammadan population is predominant Rural Sub-Registrars ought to be taken from among that people. Recently a Hindu, a Muhammadan and a Christian applied for a Rural Sub-Registrarship in the Chittagong district. Mr. Lee, the District Registrar, recommended the Muhammadan candidate as possessing the best claim for ability and seniority. But the Inspector-General appointed the Hindu candidate. This was certainly wrong and Government should consider the matter.

30. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 1st March says that want of money is never felt, when the question is one of putting money into the pockets of Europeans. Government has provided in the new Calcutta Municipal Act that every municipal Commissioner, who attends a Committee meeting, shall get a fee of Rs 20, because European merchants and tradesmen cannot afford to devote their valuable time to municipal work without remuneration. But the authorities have acted very differently when the question has been one of employing native clerks belonging to Government offices and merchants' firms on census work. Here no renumeration has been considered necessary. The natives have had to render *begar* pure and simple, although the work required of them has been much more arduous than what European merchants and tradesmen have to do as municipal Commissioners. In many cases, native enumerators in private service have been fined by their masters for absenting themselves from office in order to do census work. Yet Government has not thought it necessary to take their case into its consideration. It is, on the contrary, compelling men on pain of criminal prosecution to accept enumeratorships, which will involve them in pecuniary loss.

HITAVADI.
Mar. 1st, 1901.

III.—LEGISLATION.

31. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 27th February writes as follows:—

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA.
Feb. 27th, 1901.

The Assam Labour and Emigration Bill. We have no objection to the tea-planters protesting against the Assam Labour and Emigration Bill in order to protect their own interests. But the way in which the tea-planters of the Surma Valley are attempting to throw dust in the eyes of the public is shameful. No man with a fair amount of common sense will fail to see the worth of the argument which has been adduced by them to show that the tea-garden coolies are in well-to-do circumstances, or to realise that it is impossible for such coolies, serving as they do on a pittance of Rs. 4 or 5 a month, to make any savings. What most coolies do is to pinch and starve themselves in order that they may spare something for the maintenance of their helpless dependants at home. But in doing this, they themselves die prematurely from insufficient nourishment.

Heaven alone knows how the Surma Valley planters have ascertained that tea-garden coolies remit lakhs of rupees home. The story has certainly been got up to throw dust in the eyes of the public and the Government. From what the writer has been able to ascertain from friends in the tea-gardens, it appears that far from making savings, tea-garden coolies are always involved in debt. And that is the reason why a cooly who has once entered a tea-garden cannot come out of it in all his life. If the planters have judged the circumstances of the coolies by the standard of their own household servants and cooly taldars, they have made a mistake. But it is not probable that they

have made such a mistake. It is more probable that they have wilfully misrepresented facts. A postmaster of the writer's acquaintance, who serves in a tea district, told him that the money-orders from tea-gardens are made mostly by *arkatis* and all officers from manager down to sardar, but seldom by coolies. As the planters have produced no evidence to show that the remittances referred to by them were actually made by coolies, their argument can have no value, and Lord Curzon and his worthy Councillors will certainly take it at its true worth.

SANJIVANI,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

32. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 28th February says that the proposed increase in the pay of a cooly should be Re. 1 and not 8 annas, as the Select Committee has recommended. Lord Curzon is requested to help the poor and destitute coolies.

HITAVADI,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

33. Referring to the Assam Labour and Emigration Bill, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 1st March writes as follows:—

The Assam Labour and Emigration Bill. The Hon'ble Mr. Cotton has taken up the cause of the coolies, whom there is no one to befriend. As Indians and fellowcountrymen of the coolies, we, on their behalf and on behalf of our country, offer our heartiest thanks to Mr. Cotton. The Bill will certainly be passed into law. But Lord Curzon has the reputation of being an independent man, who is not to be influenced by others, and who never goes with the herd. We have every hope that he will not do anything hurriedly. The tea-planters have come to India to make money and not to look after the welfare of the subject-people. But Lord Curzon is here to govern and protect the subject-people, and not to help tradesmen to make more profits. We are therefore confident that he will do justice in the matter.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

SRI SRI VISHNU
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Feb. 27th, 1901

34. A correspondent of the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 27th February says that the failure of the autumn rain has completely destroyed the *aman* crop in East Bengal, and the fields are looking like arid deserts. Paddy is selling at 14 seers per rupee and even coarse rice at Rs. 4 to Rs. 4-8 per maund. The rivers being silted up and bullock-carts not being in use in East Bengal, imports of grain can be made only on horseback, but large quantities can not be imported in this way. The only hope of the people lay in the chance of a successful *rabi* harvest. But that hope is gone. All East Bengal depends on its crops for its daily as well as occasional necessities, for money to pay the zamindar's rent and the cesses and taxes due to Government and the loans made from *mahajans* and the interest thereon. It has no other resource. Even the well-to-do, who in ordinary years sell surplus corn to their neighbours, have this year no stocks of grain for their own consumption. The small harvest they reaped is already exhausted, and from this time both the poor cultivator and the well-to-do landowner will be in the same helpless condition.

Money-lenders have ceased to give loans; and thefts, particularly thefts of cows from cow-sheds, have alarmingly increased. People are also taking to incendiarism. The number of beggars has vastly increased. They wander about all day, but get no alms.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

HINDU RANJIKA,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

35. The *Hindu Ranjika* [Rajshahi] of the 27th February writes as follows:—

The memorial question. We have been discussing the question of a memorial from the day the Queen died. But the Viceroy, as if suspicious about our sense of duty, not only made haste to call a meeting but combated our views and supported his own before we had definitely expressed any opinion whatever in the matter. No time has also been lost in deciding upon the course to be taken. We shall pay money, but as we are foolish boys the Viceroy has taken upon himself the teacher's office and has addressed himself to the task of showing where we are at fault. In support of his own memorial scheme the Viceroy has cited that which was recommended by our mother in Heaven as the best form of perpetuating her husband's memory. Since the Queen has left no such recommendation about

a memorial to herself, can we be satisfied with the citing such an opinion? But we see that even if we now cry out against the scheme with our million throats, our protest will be of no avail.

We now tell the Viceroy with folded hands to establish any memorial he pleases. We would only ask him one question—cannot the hall be built by Indian architects? We know the Viceroy to be a patron of Indian art. Cannot the more than a crore of rupees that will be raised for the purpose of the erection of a memorial be utilised in encouraging Indian art? There are many Indians who are experts in western architecture. Several independent princes, the Gaikwar for example, are reputed to be good artists. Cannot the design of the hall be prepared by Indian Engineers under the direction of these men? We are extremely unwilling to fill the pockets of European Engineers by spending 10 or 20 thousand rupees on the preparation of a plan.

Secondly, let this hall be erected after the Indian method by Indian architects under the supervision of Indian Engineers. Let one gallery in this hall be studded with gold and precious stones and let an image of the Queen with the crown upon it containing the famous Kohinoor be placed in it. What is the Kohinoor? It is not a trophy obtained in war, but a peerless memorial of the past history of India.

Let the trophies of the battles fought since 1757 as well as the royal robes and decorations of the princes of Lahore and Lucknow be placed in another gallery. Besides this, let all stone slabs, copper-plates and other antiquities collected during that period that are now in English museums be placed in another gallery, and thus perpetuate the memory of the Queen's conquests in India.

Let there be placed in another gallery books relating to the scientific instruments that have been invented under the stimulus afforded by the wonderful advance of science in the nineteenth century, and as a branch institution let there be placed in some place close to Calcutta as complete a collection as possible of the scientific instruments that are in use at present and let colleges and workshops be established for teaching different sections of the Indian people the use of these instruments. Nothing could be a more enduring memorial to the Queen in this fallen India than the seed of progress which these colleges and workshops will sow besides perpetuating her memory.

Let a library be also established by procuring copies of the ancient manuscripts kept in the different libraries and museums of Europe. In connection with this library let arrangements be made for the collection of Sanskrit, Pali, Persian, Urdu, Arabic and other manuscripts written in the Indian languages and for a grant of adequate rewards to Indian savants who invent any agricultural or manufacturing implement or make any scientific or antiquarian discovery. There is little chance of the improvement of Indian arts and manufactures without such encouragement.

The Queen.

36. The same paper contains a Bengali poem lamenting the death of the Queen.

37. The *Medini Bandhan* [Midnapore] of the 27th February contains
The late Queen-Empress. a Sanskrit poem lamenting the death of the late Queen Empress.

38. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 28th February says that as Lady

Lady Curzon's commemoration proposal. Curzon proposes that in her plan to commemorate the late Queen Victoria Memorial the money that will be raised in a place will be utilised in educating midwives for that place, not a word can be said against her project, and it is hoped that Bengali ladies will be liberal in helping to make it a success.

The late Queen-Empress.

of the late Queen-Empress.

39. The *Education Gazette* [Chinsura] of the 1st March contains a Sanskrit poem lamenting the death

40. The *Hilavadi* [Calcutta] of the 1st March says that as the Rajas, Zamindars, &c., of this country are not in affluent circumstances, Lord Curzon has laid down the rule that those among them who will not be able to pay in their subscriptions to the Victoria Memorial Fund in one instalment may do so in convenient instalments extending over three years. It is difficult to believe

HINDU RANJIK,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

MEDINI BANDHAN,
Feb. 27th, 1901.

SANJIVANI,
Feb. 28th, 1901.

EDUCATION
GAZETTE,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

HILAVADI,
Mar. 1st, 1901.

that the self-same Viceroy, who a few months ago rebuked Indian Princes for wasting money in Europe on western luxuries, is now devising means to drain their exchequer.

DACCA
PRAKASH,
Mar. 3rd, 1901.

41. The *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca] of the 3rd March cannot approve of the memorial question. The proposal, which has been made by some, that a famine fund should be formed with the money which will be collected for the Victoria memorial. Government has never made financial difficulty a plea for refusing relief to the famine-stricken. It is true large numbers of men die in famine. But that is because Government does not get timely information of their sufferings, and not because Government cannot afford to help them for want of a famine fund. In the last famine, Government spent about six crores of rupees from its own exchequer, still a very large number of deaths took place for want of timely information. Suppose a fund of two, three or four crores of rupees is formed and maintained, that will be no guarantee that every case of starvation will be promptly brought to the notice of the administrators of the fund.

It is also a question whether a fund can be created which will supply food from year's end to year's end to the two hundred millions of Indians who have always to live on insufficient food, and whether it is wise policy to maintain such a large number of people in this way.

The Victoria Hall which has been proposed by the Viceroy will not only perpetuate the memory of the late Empress, but will preserve the memories of the notabilities of this country — not a small gain to the country, considering the instruction these memorials will convey to the people. It is certain that a hall like the one proposed will impart more knowledge to the Indians than the reading of school books for a hundred years. Even if the Victoria Hall contain nothing, it will be of immense value simply as a magnificent building. It is a source of no common glory and benefit to the country that it possesses a building like the Taj at Agra, which stands as a monument of Moghul rule and proclaims to the world what ancient Indian art could achieve. A Victoria Hall constructed even under European supervision will greatly benefit the country by imparting much useful instruction to the native workmen, who will work under European Engineers.

42. Referring to Lord Curzon's speech in the Asiatic Society, the *Prativasi*

Lord Curzon's speech in the [Calcutta] of the 4th March writes as follows:—
Asiatic Society.

We eagerly went to hear the speech. Lord Curzon is a celebrated speaker, and his eloquence charmed us. But he failed to convince us of the necessity of a Victoria Hall. We failed to see any point in his argument, the substance of which was that as smaller local memorials would like water-bubbles disappear from the face of the earth in course of time, it was necessary, in order to keep the memory of Her late Majesty ever fresh in the minds of Her subjects, to erect a memorial on a large and grand scale; but time makes no distinction between great and small, and the great may perish while the small may survive. In a word, Lord Curzon's argument was not an argument; it was only a rhetorical flourish.

Lord Curzon forgot the principal point at issue. The main question asked by the objectors to the proposed scheme was — was there in India no greater want than a Victoria Hall? Educated Indians are still, it is true, lacking in a certain degree in historical culture. But they are not so backward in this department of knowledge as to be unable to realise the value of a historical picture gallery or museum. To teach Indians the value of such an institution is a task which the promoters of high education in India did not leave to Lord Curzon to accomplish. His Lordship is mistaken, if he thinks that it is our inability to appreciate the value of a hall like the one he has proposed, which has made us its opponents. We do not deny the high value of a Victoria Hall. But what we ask is — is a Victoria Hall our highest and greatest need? Is the want of a picture gallery our sorest want? Lord Curzon did not discuss this question. He made no attempt to establish the superior value and importance of a Victoria Hall by comparing it with other schemes. He drew a splendid picture of what the hall would be, but he did not meet the arguments of those who were opposed to its construction.

It was thought that Lord Curzon's gushing loyalty, his eagerness to establish a memorial to the late Empress, the intensity of his imagination and

the intoxication engendered by his scheme had removed from his mind every memory of the ghastly scenes he had witnessed some months ago in the famine-stricken districts. But his proposal to devote the surplus of the Indian National Memorial Fund to the relief of famine-stricken men and women shows that he has not quite forgotten their sufferings. But if he remembers their sufferings, does he not think it right to keep back at least for a time his scheme for the historical education of a country whose inhabitants are dying in the streets for want of food, like so many dogs and jackals, and where big monuments can be erected in every province with the skeletons of the dead?

To live is man's first foremost thought: progress and education come afterwards. The first duty of a Sovereign is to save his subjects from the jaws of death. Save the subjects first; you can afterwards elevate them by education. Sin will be incurred by providing for the education of the subject-people, while you neglect to save the lives of millions of them in absolute want of food. A knowledge of history will not appease the hunger of those whom hunger drives mad and want of food brings to death's door.

43. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 7th March has the following:—

BASUMATI,
Mar. 7th, 1901.

Collection of subscriptions for the Victoria Memorial. We fully believe that many indebted zamindars will increase their burden of debts in order to utilise the present unique opportunity of showing

their loyalty to the British throne. Subscriptions are being solicited by means of letters. We found two such letters in the house of a petty zamindar, the owner of a 9 *couri* and 3 *danti* share in a zamindari, one signed by Mr. Playfair and the other by Mr. Taylor. The zamindar told us that his name has probably been unearthed with the help of a directory. The purport of the two letters is the same. The meaning of the opening sentence is not quite clear. What is the meaning of the word *পতিবিধি অনুগ্রহক*? Why, again, should the people consider the proposed general committee "representative of all classes and parts of the country?" The people are not in favour of the Viceroy's scheme and are not prepared to accept the views of a few Rajas and Maharajas who have merely echoed the Viceroy's sentiments. How can the objection of the people be met when they deny the representative character of the committee?

Government frowns in anger when a zamindar exacts illegal cesses from his raiyats. It should, therefore, know that the handsome contributions which zamindars make, partly from loyalty and partly from fear, towards the execution of works of public utility, for which subscriptions are demanded, are raised by them from poor raiyats. Zamindars possess no mints of their own to supply them with money whenever wanted.

URIYA PAPERS.

44. The *Uriya and Navasambad* [Balasore] of the 20th February and the *Samvadavahika* [Balasore] of the 21st February are Effects of the February rains. of opinion that the rains in the month of February have done some good to *rabi* and other standing crops.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD,
Feb. 20th, 1901.

45. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 20th February regrets Unwholesome sweetmeats in to find that the sweetmeats sold in the Balasore town. town are made of bad materials and are so unwholesome as to demand the interference of the municipal authorities in the interest of the health of the town.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD.

46. The same paper is of opinion that if the export of rice and other food-grains from India be stopped, their high price will be reduced and they will come within the buying power of the Indians, who as a people are very poor. How to make rice cheap.

URIYA AND
NAVASAMVAD.

47. The *Utkaldipika*, [Cuttack] of the 23rd February is sorry to notice Increase of accidents on the Orissa Branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. that accidents, apparently due to the carelessness of officers in the employ of the Orissa Branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, are increasing in number, as during the past two or three weeks carriages and engines were twice reported as derailed, thereby causing loss and damage both to the

UTKALDIPAKA,
Feb. 23rd, 1901.

passengers and the Company. The writer hopes that the authorities will take note of this.

ASSAM PAPERS.

SILCHAR,
Feb. 15th, 1901.

48. Babu Bidhu Bhusan Ray, Editor of the *Silchar* [Silchar] newspaper, who was also the Head Pandit of the Narasingha Dismissal of a Pandit by School in Silchar, writing in the issue of the paper Dr. Booth. for the 15th February says that in consequence of his writing something against Dr. Booth, Director of Public Instruction, Assam, he has been by order of the Director dismissed from service. Loss of service in old age has placed him in great difficulty, because the income from his paper is not so large as to provide him with a sufficient livelihood. But he means to earn a livelihood by practising as a *kaviraj* in Silchar and will thereby defeat Dr. Booth's object in dismissing him—which was to compel him to leave Silchar and give up his paper. He will now be freer to write in his paper than he was when in service.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 9th March, 1901.